The Cleveland Museum of Art

The Cleveland Museum of Art Announces New Acquisitions

News Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, January 10, 2022

Kelley Notaro Schreiber

The Cleveland Museum of Art
knotaro@clevelandart.org
216-707-6898

Cleveland (January 10, 2022)—Recent acquisitions by the Cleveland Museum of Art (CMA) include an important watercolor by Paul Cézanne; a mixed-media artwork by Rashid Johnson and three sculptures from Melvin Edwards's series, *Lynch Fragments*, that build upon the CMA's commitment to diversifying its collections.

Footpath in the Woods [1]

Watercolor by Paul Cézanne is a new highlight in the CMA's internationally recognized collection of works on paper

The acquisition of ***Footpath in the Woods*** [1], a watercolor by Post-Impressionist Paul Cézanne, builds upon the CMA's internationally recognized stature as a repository of important 19th-century French art.

With its innovative depiction of a trail traversing a forest at the Jas de Bouffan, an estate Cézanne inherited from his father, ***Footpath in the Woods*** exemplifies the artist's groundbreaking practice. He used selective strokes of watercolor from a limited palette to suggest light and shade, and allowed work in graphite in combination with the paper's whiteness to construct the image. The result is a seemingly unfinished work that was in fact carefully rendered through a process that did not allow for revision.

The subject of ***Footpath in the Woods*** is Cézanne's most characteristic; he depicted and reinterpreted the chestnut tree forests of the Jas de Bouffan in various media throughout much of his life. This experimental approach allowed Cézanne to interrogate vision itself, as if to suggest that seeing occurs just as much through absence as it does presence. The composition's balance of abstraction and representation, as well as its experimental style, make ***Footpath in the Woods*** an ideal example of the artist's watercolors.

Although the CMA has three paintings and several drawings and prints by the artist, ***Footpath in the Woods*** is the first watercolor by Cézanne to enter the museum's collection and will be highlighted in the

forthcoming exhibition and publication *Nineteenth-Century French Drawings at the Cleveland Museum of Art* [2], on view from January 20 through April 30, 2023.

Standing Broken Men **by Rashid Johnson**

Long Term**,** ***À Lusaka*** **and** ***Miliki*** **by Melvin Edwards**

Works by Rashid Johnson and Melvin Edwards expand the CMA's representation of works by African American artists

Standing Broken Men (2021) by Rashid Johnson is an important addition to the CMA's contemporary collection and meaningfully advances the museum's goal of diversifying its holdings.

At the center of a frenzied mosaic, an abstract, fractured figure stares wide-eyed at the viewer. ***Standing Broken Men*** and a related series of mosaic works grew out of Johnson's Anxious Men and Anxious Audiences series (2015–18). As ***Standing Broken Men*** exemplifies, Johnson's latest works continue to represent the experience of anxiety by composing figures through fragmented shards of ceramic and mirrored tiles. Through this technique, brokenness is inherent in the figures and the worlds they inhabit. However, their pieces are reassembled into a dynamic colorful whole, suggesting the possibility for healing and renewal. As with much of Johnson's work, ***Standing Broken Men*** can be interpreted as a poignant reflection on the time when it was made, defined by a global pandemic and a heightened reckoning with racial inequality. ***Standing Broken Men*** comes to the museum as a generous gift from Agnes Gund in honor of Helena Huang.

Alongside recent acquisitions by artists such as Robert Colescott, Simone Leigh, Emma Amos and Wadsworth Jarrell, among others, ***Standing Broken Men*** expands the range of narratives surrounding African American experiences on view at the CMA. This monumental work also complements three prints by Johnson from his *Anxious Men* series that the museum acquired in 2020 (2020.77 [3], 2020.78 [4] and 2020.79 [5]). Together, they capture the innovative evolution of Johnson's art across media.

Standing Broken Men will be on view in Toby's Gallery for Contemporary Art (229A) beginning in late March 2022.

Long Term (1980), ***À Lusaka*** (1982) and ***Miliki*** (1987) by Melvin Edwards further enhance the CMA's commitment to diversifying its collections and presenting a broad range of histories in its galleries.

Long Term, ***À Lusaka*** and ***Miliki*** belong to an ongoing series, *Lynch Fragments*, that Melvin Edwards began in 1963. The *Lynch Fragments* are relatively small-scale, abstract metal wall reliefs that feature recognizable objects—often objects that could serve as weapons, such as chains, knives and railroad spikes. Through Edwards's composition and welding technique, familiar elements lose their functional associations and yield innovative sculptural shapes. These forms reveal Edwards's influences, which range from Western modernist sculpture and jazz to traditions of African metalsmithing.

The series title, *Lynch Fragments*, the artist has explained, is reflective of his intention to encourage consideration of the violence and destruction wrought by racism in and beyond American society. The title is not, he has said, to be taken literally; from the outset he determined that the series would never depict narrative scenes or recognizable figurative imagery. Even without literal scenes of violence, the works invite a direct confrontation with the viewer; they are displayed at eye level and protrude off the wall into the viewer's space.

Through the *Lynch Fragments* series, Edwards combines his commitment to abstraction with his investment in the social and racial histories unfolding outside his studio walls. In this sense, his work shares attributes with peers that include David Hammons, Jack Whitten and Martin Puryear, whose works are represented in the CMA's collection and offer rich context for this acquisition.

Please view the press kit [6] for more information and images.

# # #

About the Cleveland Museum of Art

The Cleveland Museum of Art is renowned for the quality and breadth of its collection, which includes more than 63,000 artworks and spans 6,000 years of achievement in the arts. The museum is a significant international forum for exhibitions, scholarship and performing arts and is a leader in digital innovations. One of the top comprehensive art museums in the nation, recognized for its award-winning Open Access program and free of charge to all, the Cleveland Museum of Art is located in the University Circle neighborhood.

The museum is supported in part by residents of Cuyahoga County through a public grant from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture and made possible in part by the Ohio Arts Council (OAC), which receives support from the State of Ohio and the National Endowment for the Arts. The OAC is a state agency that funds and supports quality arts experiences to strengthen Ohio communities culturally, educationally and economically. For more information about the museum and its holdings, programs and events, call 888-CMA-0033 or visit cma.org [7].

Press Announcements [8]

Source URL:https://www.clevelandart.org/about/press/media-kit/cleveland-museum-art-announces-new-acquisitions-15

Links

[1] https://www.clevelandart.org/art/2021.165 [2] https://www.clevelandart.org/exhibitions/nineteenth-century-french-drawings-cleveland-museum-art [3] https://www.clevelandart.org/art/2020.77 [4] https://www.clevelandart.org/art/2020.78 [5] https://www.clevelandart.org/art/2020.79 [6] https://www.dropbox.com/sh/zyoovnq6pt0yv9r/AADlMg1O6LhmQkz-YTi3NkxOa?dl=0 [7] https://www.clevelandart.org [8] https://www.clevelandart.org/about/press/media-kit